

# **Degilbo-Mundubbera Railway Bridges, 1905-1914**



## **CEREMONY REPORT**

**on the presentation of an**

### **ENGINEERING HERITAGE MARKER**

**on 17 October 2016**

**at Gayndah Heritage Railway Station**

**Prepared by**

**Engineering Heritage Queensland**

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# 1 Introduction

More than 20 guests attended a ceremony on the 17th October 2016 at the Gayndah Heritage Railway Station in Queensland to unveil a marker and interpretation panel, awarding an Engineering Heritage Marker to the Degilbo-Mundubbera Railway Bridges, 1905-1914.

The ceremony organised jointly by Engineers Australia Queensland Division and the North Burnett Regional Council was also supported by Department of Transport and Main Roads Queensland, Queensland Rail and the Gayndah Heritage Railway Rail Trail Inc. Representatives from these organisations as well as the local community attended. Most members of the regional council attended.

## 2 Invitation and Media Release

**In recognition of William Pagan, Chief Engineer, Queensland Railways (1902-1911)**

Dear Allan,

Engineers Australia Queensland and Engineering Heritage Australia request the pleasure of your company at the:

**Award of Engineering Heritage Marker  
Degilbo-Mundubbera Railway Bridges, 1905-1914**

to be unveiled by

**Cr Rachel Chambers  
North Burnett Region Mayor**

The bridges on the Degilbo to Mundubbera line were the result of new design ideas and construction methods implemented by Queensland Railways' Chief Engineer, William Pagan.

The variation in type and the proximity to each other on the same railway line are unique. In addition to steel and concrete bridges, there were also many traditional timber trestle bridges. The significance continues today as a tangible reminder of the engineering techniques and achievements of the railway engineers of the early 20th century.

Light refreshments will be provided.

**This invitation is complimentary, however registration is essential.  
Please RSVP by Tuesday, 11 October 2016.**

### Event Information

**Date:  
Monday  
17 October 2016**

**Time:  
11.30am - 1.00pm**

**Venue:  
Gayndah Heritage  
Railway Station  
9 National Street  
Gayndah 4625**

**By Invitation Only**

[www.engineersaustralia.org.au/qld](http://www.engineersaustralia.org.au/qld)

10/10/2016

## Engineering achievements of the Degilbo to Mundubbera Railway Bridges recognised

The contributions of the Degilbo - Mundubbera Railway Bridges to the local region and the practice of engineering will be acknowledged with a prestigious Engineers Australia Engineering Heritage Marker on Monday 17 October at the Gayndah Heritage Railway Station.

Chair of Engineers Australia's Engineering Heritage Queensland Andrew Barnes said that the original railway bridges, which were vital to the region economically, were particularly innovative for their time with unusually diverse structures and proximity.

"The 11 railway bridges on the Degilbo to Mundubbera line were highly significant when constructed, evidencing new design approaches and construction methods," Mr Barnes said.

"The railway line and bridges were critical to the economic life of the region, as construction took place when rail was the dominant form of land transportation for meat, dairy and agricultural products."

The railway from Mungar Junction on the Maryborough line to Degilbo was built between 1889 and 1893, with the Degilbo to Gayndah section built between 1905 and 1907 and the line to Mundubbera between 1911 and 1914.

"The bridges showcase the variety of designs used by William Pagan, Chief Engineer of Queensland Railways," Mr Barnes said.

"These bridges show many innovations, including the use of parts from previously-constructed bridges, which resulted in better or less costly structures."

The recognition of significant engineering landmarks would not be possible without the Engineering Heritage Recognition Program, which identifies works that are valuable to a group of people, or have contributed something of value to the nation, a region or to the practice of engineering.

"This program is a means of bringing public recognition to engineering works of historic or heritage significance and to the engineers who created them," Mr Barnes said.

"The aims of the program are to encourage the conservation of Australian engineering heritage, and to raise community awareness of engineering and the benefits it provides."

The Engineering Heritage Marker will be announced on Monday 17 October 2016 at the Gayndah Railway Station, 9 National Street, Gayndah, with photo opportunities between 12 noon and 1 pm.

-ENDS-

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### **3 Program**

Master of Ceremonies was Andrew Barnes chair of Engineering Heritage Queensland

1. Welcome by Andrew Barnes –acknowledges guests and apologies.
2. Acknowledgment of Country.
3. Andrew invites Mayor, Cr Rachel Chambers to welcome guests  
The Mayor speaks on the recognition, the work of the pioneers, the importance of the railway in the development of the region and the benefits the recognition brings to the local community.
4. Andrew's presentation of EHA and ceremony.  
Andrew outlined the heritage recognition program in EA and the importance of such ceremonies both to EA and to the local communities. He also highlighted the uniqueness of the style of the bridges recognised under this award.
5. Andrew and the Mayor jointly unveil the Interpretation Panel.
6. Andrew invites Allan Churchward EHQ member to outline the work behind the award.  
Allan explained the amount of work which Brian McGrath who was the driving force behind the recognition had undertaken. Brain had undertaken a number of trips to the site to photograph and to research the history of the bridges. Sadly Brian passed away in August 2016.
7. Andrew invites Mayor to give a thank you speech.
8. Andrew closes ceremony and invites all for refreshments
9. Official Photographs

## 4 Interpretation Panels

Four Interpretation Panels have been installed by the North Burnett Regional Council. These are at the Gayndah Railway Station, the Gayndah Museum, the Mundubbera Railway Station and the Biggenden Railway Station. All have access to the general public. Two are shown below.



**Gayndah Railway Station**



**Mundubbera Railway Station**

## 5 Acknowledgement - Brian McGrath

Brian McGrath, a member of Engineering Heritage Queensland was the driving force behind the recognition of this amazing array of bridge structures in regional Queensland. Brian was responsible for the detailed research into the history of the bridges and the designer responsible William Pagan. He gained approval from Engineering Heritage Australia for the bridges to be awarded an Engineering Heritage Marker. Sadly he passed away before he would see the culmination of his efforts - a ceremony awarding the Engineering Heritage Marker to the Degilbo-Mundubbera Railway Bridges, 1905-1914.

**For a tribute to Brian by Engineers Australia visit**

**<https://www.engineersaustralia.org.au/News/vale-brian-leonard-mcgrath-1937-2016>**



## 6 Photographs



Andrew welcomes guests



Mayor Rachel Chambers



Andrew and Mayor unveil the panel



Allan Churchward



North Burnett Regional Councillors, Mayor and Andrew



## Heritage Bridges Recognised

By Kate Anbeek



North Burnett Regional Council councillors attended the Engineers Australia award ceremony at Gayndah Heritage Railway and are pictured with the interpretive panel, from left, Cr Paul Lobegeier, Cr John Zahl, Cr Fay Whelan, Cr John Bowen, Cr Chambers, Cr Rob Radel, and Andrew Barnes from Engineering Heritage QLD; special interest group of Engineering Australia.

More than twenty people gathered at the Gayndah Heritage Railway on October 17 to celebrate the recognition given to several of the region's rail bridges under the Engineering Heritage Australia's Engineering Recognition Program.

The award ceremony, which included the official unveiling of heritage markers and an interpretive panel, was attended by members of Engineers Australia, Department of Transport and Main Roads, Gayndah Rail Trail Heritage Group, North Burnett Regional Council and community members.

The interpretive panel features photographs and historic information about the bridges built from 1905-1915 along the Degilbo to Mundubbera railway line.

It is one of three panels, of which another two will be unveiled at a later date in Mundubbera and Biggenden. Chairman of Engineering Heritage QLD, Andrew Barnes, said the eleven bridges nominated for the award are of important engineering significance.

"There are about eight different styles of bridge architecture along the Degilbo to Mundubbera line and you don't often see such variety", Mr Barnes said.

Mayor Rachel Chambers said the heritage markers recognise the amazing feats of the engineer who designed the unique bridges, at the same time as telling the story of our past by showcasing the integral part the rail corridor played in the history of the North Burnett.

"Additionally the markers create interest for our travelling public and hopefully convince some to stay a while longer", she said.

In her speech, Mayor Chambers acknowledged the work of her predecessor in making the heritage recognition possible.

Allan Churchward from Engineers Australia was in attendance at the award ceremony and was involved in the recognition and said the nomination process is quite detailed and involves much research.

The vice-president of the Gayndah Rail Trail Heritage Group, Des Randall, said the recognition will help protect the historical bridges.

"We are absolutely chuffed that our heritage rail has received this recognition", he said.

"Most importantly, we have the support of our council". This significant achievement will help put our region on the railway enthusiasts' map.